ATLANTIC GUARDIAN

THE MAGAZINE OF



NEWFOUNDLAND



- · COLLISION IN THE NARROWS
- · 'GRANNIE OF YESTERYEAR'
- · INDEX TO A. G. ADVERTISERS

MARCH, 1954. VOL. XI, NO. 2

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Atlantic Guardian

THE MAGAZINE OF NEWFOUNDLAND

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Atlantic Guardian's Platform

- To make Newfoundland better known at home and abroad;
- To promote trade and travel in the Island;
- To encourage development of the Island's natural resources;
- To foster good relations between Newfoundland and her neighbors.

Cover Picture: About thirty-five years ago The Canadian Bank of Commerce opened a branch at Belleoram in Fortune Bay, under the direction of a nautical manager who travelled the sea lanes in his own boat and brought banking facilities to isolated fishing communities. (See cover and pages 3 and 7). Painting by Tom Roberts, A.R.C.A.

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ST. JOHN'S : NEWFOUNDLAND

ATLANTIC GUARDIAN

· Here Comes the "Bank Boat"

HANGING in offices and homes all across Canada and in many other parts of the world this year, is an attractive calendar that has as its picture subject a Newfoundland settlement.

The story behind the full color painting of Belleoram, Fortune Bay, reproduced on the 1954 calendar of The Canadian Bank of Commerce is told below and elsewhere in this issue, and the painting itself is pictured on our cover.

We are pleased and proud to draw attention to and share in this fine piece of publicity for Newfoundland and to compliment The Canadian Bank of Commerce on selecting the Belleoram painting by Tom Roberts, A. R. C. A., for its current calendar.

The new branch lay on the rocky south coast of Newfoundland. The potential customers lived in isolated fishing villages stung along the coast; communication between these villages was generally by water, because roads were almost non-extent.

To the manager of the new branch this situation was an invitation; it took banking clean out of the realm of the prosaic. If the customers couldn't get in to see the branch, he would go out after them. So he bought a boat, and put an engine in her. Then he set out to look for accounts.

The "bank boat" poked her nose into every little cove along that stretch of the coast where there were human habitations, and the manager landed like some old explorer or missionary. The boat was converted into a sea-going branch, with savings passbooks and other necessary paraphernalia on board.

That was how the Belleoram branch of The Canadian Bank of Commerce got started. Part of its success was undoubtedly due to the fact that the manager was a trained seaman, one Eve Holmes, who had long followed the sea and made four journeys to Australia around the horn in the old windiammers.

On his first trip Manager Holmes had with him Captain J. M. Fudge, a successful skipper and a highliner of the Grand Banks. On the way back from Rencontre Bay to Belleoram the engine stalled. Night was falling fast, and the boat drifted helplessly. However, they stuck by the ship and by morning, when rescue arrived, they were trying to improvise oars from bits of timber removed from the cabin.

Both actors in this sea drama are now ashore, but neither is by any means washed up. Captain Fudge is still in Belleoram, engaged in the herring packing industry, and a valued customer of the branch. Mr. Holmes is farther inland, at the freshwater port of Toronto, where he is manager of the main branch. There the customers come to the bank, instead of waiting for the manager to seek them out in his cabin cruiser.

MARCH, 1954



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Settled more than a century ago by Conception Bay fishermen, this settlement on the north-east coast still is dependent on the codfishery but a highroad has ended its long isolation

Lumsden North

By DON RYAN

LUMSDEN NORTH is an oasis in contrast with its neighboring village to the south where fine ocean sands have destroyed all vegetation and have given it the appearance of a desert-swept region.

In contrast, too. Lumsden North is a flat level village whereas its southern counterpart is hilly and rocky. It is situated on a low sandy peninsula with an exposed coastline and a fine stretch of meadowland. Here gardens are set out and vegetables grown.

The fisherfolk do quite a bit of gardening and raise more vegetables than they need. They each keep a few sheep and a horse but no goats

or cows. Here as in the neighboring communities horses are used to bring firewood from five or six miles in the country.

The settlement has a slightly larger population than Lumsden South, around 270. All its residents are fisherfolk who wrest their livelihood from the shallow waters off shore.

The seas are wreckingly rough at times, especially in the fall and many schooners have snapped their cables or towed their anchors and smashed up on the rocky beach or sandy shore. Latest wreckage was the famed "Seabird" which went ashore in the fall of '51.

But for two large islands off shore, fishermen would have more boisterous seas to contend with. These two islands act as a breakwater and provide a sheltered anchorage for their fishing boats.

Because of the storms some fishermen have to take down part of their stageheads in the fall and build them out again in the spring. Fishermen do well with the cod and lobster and yearly catches are generally good. This year some trap fishermen got as much cod as they could handle.

But like Lumsden South, this village is not without its shifting sands. About half of the shoreline bordering the village is nothing but

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a sand heap - - - the other half is strewn with boulders.

Sands too are making their encroachments to the south of the village and some gardens are partly buried under. Fences have been built along the beach to prevent the sands from drifting. But there's no way to prevent them from shifting with the tides and storms and as a result the cove waters are getting shallower. Where fishermen could get with their motor boats three years ago, they can walk within fifty feet of it now.

Settlers From Conception Bay

The first settlers came to this straight shoreline a little more than a century ago. They were residents of Carbonear and Harbor Grace who used to go north to fish in the summer and return again in the fall. But some of them settled in the cove where there was an abundance of good crop land, and thus a settlement came into existence. This seasonal fishing trek to northern waters ceased about half a century ago.

For a century the settlement has been in isolation but in 1952 the highroad was pushed out into the village, thus linking it with Wesley-ville and the other settlements in the area. Previously all transportation into and out of the village was by boat.

This new road leading into Lumsden opens wider the doors of hospitality to visitors and friends who are found, like the sands, to drift into the village, especially during the vacation season.



(From the Canadian Bank of Commerce 1954 Calendar)

HE sea, which gives them their livelihood, is also the main highway for fishing villages along Newfoundland's south coast. the old days island communications were almost non-existent. only vistors were American fishing vessels which put into the little harbors to take on ice and bait. Cod fishermen use three kinds of bait. according to the season of the year: herring, caplin and squid. Sometimes the Americans paid for their purchases in gold coins. Money transactions were infrequent in the fishing villages and the coins were often tucked; way for years in some hiding place.

Then, about thirty five years ago, The Canadian Bank of Commerce opened a branch at Belleoram, in Fortune Bay, a strategic point on the south coast. The young Manager* was a natural choice for the job in that seafaring community. He had trained in the Worcester, the training ship which gave Sir Ernest Shackleton, the renowned polar explorer, his early lessons in seamanship. For eight

Belleoram and the Bank

years the new Manager had followed the sea and had four times rounded the Horn in windjammers. He came ashore only because a slight defect in his eyesight would have kept him from getting his Master's certificate.

Belleoram was a challenge to this nautical banker. There were no roads by which customers could come to his branch from other coastal villages and he decided to go to them. He bought a thirty-foot boat and equipped her with an engine. This boat, the "Kohinoor", was soon poking her nose into every harbor along the coast as the Manager visited the fishing villages and called on the inhabitants to ex-



(See Cover)

Eve Holmes, now manager of the main Toronto Branch.

plain to them the banking facilities that were available. Often he was able to help one or another of the clergymen who labored on that coast by taking him along in the "Kohinoor," a procedure helpful also in establishing his bonafides. He always carried a plug of tobacco and a bag of candies---children in those parts then rarely saw candy from one year's end to another.

In the hold of the "Kohinoor" the Manager carried savings passbooks and other equipment needed in his work. Sometimes he would bring back as much as \$30,000 in American gold coins, that had lain hidden for a half-century or more in the cottages of the south coast fishing villages.

To-day, as in that time, The Canadian Bank of Commerce is to be found at the frontiers — wherever modern banking services are needed, in remote places as well as in the established cities, towns and villages of Canada.

Little Grannie of Yesteryear

By FLORENCE MILLER

Where are you hiding, dear little Grannie,
Dear little Grannie of Yesteryear,
With your wrinkled hands and your gentle fingers,
Your little mouth with its smile of cheer?

Homes have lost much of their meaning, Grannie, Life is selfish and morals slack; Only your oldtime ways can save us, Only your ethics can bring us back.

Little the time you had for reading,

The books were few on your rugged shelves,
Yet your counsel held all that matters—
"Think of others before yourselves."

"Just be honest and kind and upright,"

"Always value your own good name,"

Golden rules for that early training

Which taught our fathers to play the game.

Come with your remedies sure and simple, Cure our ills with your homemade brew; Chase our headaches and bind our fingers, Pour your balm on our spirits, too. Come with your wonderful Bible stories
Bring our children your treasure-store;
Hear their prayers again, night and morning,
Charm their ears with your fairy lore.

Snip red tape with your little scissors, Shatter rules which the childless make— Rock our babies to sleep, dear Grannie, Soothe their crying if they awake.

Mend the bridge to the Land of Slumber That the timorous baby-feet, Creeping back, are afraid no longer— Give them memories warm and sweet.

Even so were your own reared, Grannie— Splendid women and stalwart men! Nurtured in human love and wisdom, May not our own race rise again?

Come with your influence strong and cheery, Lap us round with your sturdiness; Help us foster a generation Such as you built yourself—no less.

Draw your chair from the shadows, Grannie, Put on your glasses, resume your sway; Say you were only nodding, dozing, Dreaming the long, long years away!



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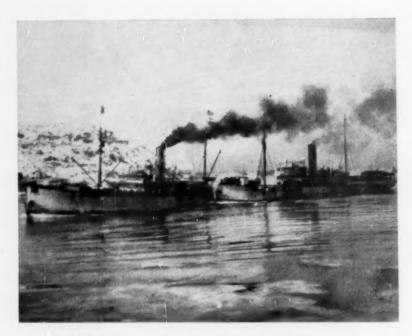
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Collision in the Narrows

By ERN MAUNDER

FOR years it had been the habit of myself and some of my chums together with our girl friends, to meet at Cavendish Square (in front of where the Newfoundland Hotel now stands) at 7:30 A.M. on the 10th of March to walk out to the lower Battery at Chain Rock to watch the departure of the sealing fleet for the annual seal-hunt. We would each bring a cake of Harvey's No. 1 Hard Tack--- and it was hard---also peppermint knobs to ward off hunger since only the girls would get breakfast that morning. as we boys had to go to work directly after the fleet had gone.

Generally it was a cold, sunny

morning. and such excitement! From 6:00 A.M. the town would be awake; the 16 or 18 ships would be blowing their horns, whistles and sirens, calling their crews aboard. For a week previous St. John's would be filled with big. burly, bearded men in suits, made often from No. 1 duck, belted, with sheath knife, steels, and goggle case. Many of them had walked miles to the railway to come to St. John's to get a "berth" to the ice. I have often seen a man hauling his wooden chest containing his clothes, etc. down Water Street. The chest would be mounted on two flour barrel staves as runners. The shop

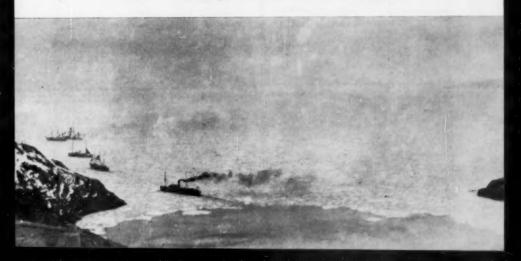
windows in hardware stores would be filled with sealer's gear; sparables or short spikes to go in the boot soles, goggles in green or brown glass to avoid ice blindness, steels and knives, skinny wopper or skin boots, "flat-ass" kettles, tin pans and tin and graniteware mugs for their food. I'll bet you Water Street in those days presented a busy scene as groups of big men met buddies they hadn't seen for a year and stopped for a yarn. As St. John's had public houses then there would be the occasional row and we lads enjoyed them. But to get back to the story.

In our group there generally would be a comic lad who would keep the party lively on the walk out to the Battery. Of course, we would have our Brownie box cameras with us. Looking west, the harbour would present a brave sight—alas no longer seen. From lower Harvey's the ships would be stoking up. Volumes of smoke would be pouring from their fun

nels, mixed with steam from the saftey valves, flags flying, men shouting, the master-watches calling the roll, the search for stowaways by the master-watches armed with a broom handle or gaff. It was considered good luck to have a stowaway or two, generally young boys, 16 or 18 years of age, out for adventure (no road houses or beer halls for them, they wanted "adventure").

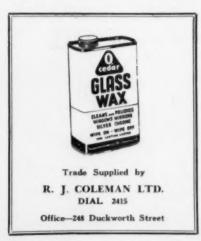
As eight o'clock drew near the sirens started anew. The bedlam was terrific. The ships started backing out into the harbor from their wharves. There were goodbyes and cat calls from hundreds of friends and well wishers on the wharves. It was a rare sight. There was always rivalry to be first through the 'Gap' or "Narrows". On this particular morning several ships had passed us going out. Forecastles and rigging were jammed with men (some of the larger ships carried 250 men). Joy guns were fired by the resid-

The Author was Johnny-on-the-Spot in the Sealing Accident of 1914



ents of the houses on the hill above us and with the frequent blowing of the sirens, it was terrific--it got in your blood and you were all excited too.

Suddenly we were all attention. as we saw trouble approaching. The Narrows, opposite where we stood, is at its narrowest; on our side, Chain Rock, and opposite. Pancake Rock. Three ships were coming out close astern of one another; the Bonaventure passed out, the Beothic next astern, followed by the Bellaventure. The Beothic slowed down to pick up one of her crew from a boat as he missed the ship at the wharf. The Bellaventure had too much speed on to stop (remember, all ships were going almost full speed). She struck the Beothic almost at the stern and pushed that portion of the ship ahead, thus blocking them both. The ships went full astern but had too much forward way on and side by side they struck the bottom, just a few yards from where we stood near Haycove. (We almost jumped in-



to the water, so excited were we). When the ships struck bottom they made a loud, tearing sound, something like that made by a sleigh going over gravel. Owing to their round bows and cutaway bottoms, both ships rose up out of the water like two dogs for about twenty or thirty feet of their length. Then, under the pull of their reversed engines, they splashed back and both went outside the Narrows.

Apparently, the Bellaventure was not damaged much since she proceeded on the voyage. (Had she come back, a Sheriff's writ would have been nailed to her mast to hold her for damage). When the fleet passed out the Beothic came in, very much down at the bows, having ten feet of water in her hold, and proceeded up to the dry dock. She was badly damaged and was in dock some time. The crew of 250 men lost their spring at the ice and it was generally a mess.

The pictures we took won the case of \$50,000. It was indeed an exciting morning that I will never forget.

The ships passing out that morning were: Adventure, Bonaventure, Bellaventure (Harvey & Co.); Leopard and Labrador (Baird's); Bloodhound, Southern Cross, Vanguard, Iceland Seal (Baine Johnston); Florizel, Stephano, Terra Nova, Eagle, Ranger, Kite (Bowring Bros.); Walrus (Farquher & Co., Halifax); Diana, Erik, Thetis, Beothic, Nascopie, Neptune (Jobs); Esquimaux (Murray's); Stella-Maris of Halifax.

Alas, not one of those fine ships are existing today. "Sic Transit Gloria".



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"All Together, Me Hearties"

Whether it's unloading a smoke stack for the Notre Dame Bay Memorial Hospital at Twillingate or hauling up a small fishing boat on the rough outer coastline of the Bonavista Peninsula, when a bunch of hardy Newfoundlanders get their grip on it, it comes or else something gives.

When the going's tough or there's very little budge, there's a panting pause, broken by, "My Dear's, boys, nobody's haulin'."

Then, as muscles strain, "Now, we boys, er-r-r-r up wid 'er. Keep 'er coming'. Come on, now . . . Yope 'er up."

The strained crowd relax for a moment, and a voice or two is heard. "Now, haul together, boys. Keep 'er comin'."

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Sealing in the Old Days

By ERN MAUNDER

IN late February or early March the Coves would be filled with small Horse Slides from the settlements of Torbay, Outer Cove and other nearby places, each slide loaded with one or two "Punts" or small boats roughly 18 x 6 x 3 which would be sold to the sealing firms of Bowrings, Jobs, Baine Johnston. These "Punts" would be built in the fisherman's spare time and although rough "hatchet and saw" jobs were a delight to the nautical eye. They were tarred all over outside, the gunwales and insides were left natural wood. Each ship carried twelve or more "Punts" slung overside on davits and nests of four bottom up, one atop the other, on "gallows" or wooden frames across the ship aft of the fore and main masts over the "Galleys" or cookhouses. The local woodworking factories and carpenter shops would be beseiged by big husky men each with a brin bag or sacking looking for a filling of wood-chaff or shavings to form a bed or pallett to lie on in the holds where they slept and lived. It was quite a sight in the holds with the men laying on those palletts having a "mug up", the little "bogie" or small stove glowing in the semi darkness with the "flat ass" kettles atop singing away. The men smoked and yarned and occasionally someone played a mouth organ. Probably they had not seen each

other since the previous Can you imagine our present day sealers lying and sleeping in the holds on top of the "fat"? they get spring mattresses and white bread, no rock hard "Duffs" for them. If one of those "Duffs" hit you, you would feel it. Other slides would be loaded with birch brooms and woven baskets (for passing ice into the hold to cool the "Pelts" and gather freshwater ice off a berg to make "pinnacle tea"). The ice was melted in iron boxes filled with steam coils: it tasted somewhat brackish, but drinkable, Other slides had loads of sticks about six feet long to which the crew attached iron hooks and were used as gaffs. Occasionally two or more dogs would be tackled to a small slide or "catamaran" with a load of birch brooms. The cost of outfitting an average sealing ship twenty years ago was high, somewhere in the vicinity of ten to twenty thousand dollars, and it is much higher today. If the ships made a poor voyage or came in "clean" the firms lost heavily. When "signing on" the crew got a "Crop" to the value of ten to twelve dollars. On a good voyage, this was deducted from their wages: if a poor one the firm took the loss. A "Crop" consisted of small groceries, sheath knife, steel and goggles and maybe a bottle of "Old Tom", I can well remember the

endless variety of food stuffs being Bags of Harvey's put on board. No. 1 Hard Bread for fish and brewis, quintals of dry salt fish, barrels of flour, pork and potatoes, sacks of peas, beans, etc. Before wireless was invented the Block House on Signal Hill was a focal point about the seventeenth of March, many of our older citizens would automatically look up to see if the Block House, or Cabot Tower had a flag on the center pole and a ball on the yard to the north. indicating a sealing steamer in sight heading for St. John's. When she was close enough for the signalman to recognise her markings such as a funnel or house flag, up would go the firm's flag on the other pole. and people would flock to the Southside to welcome the crew. Until she got within shouting distance no one knew what kind of success she had.

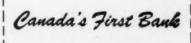
The old-time captains would over load their ships to the point of danger. One time the S.S. Neptune had such a load the crew could wash their hands overside. towed other skins until she got into smooth water, then took them aboard. She was very tender and her buoyancy and stability were near the vanishing point. Sometimes seals were taken off St. John's. Some years ago, our older readers will recall, two sealers loaded off St. John's within sight of Signal Hill. I myself a few years ago was atop Signal Hill watching S. S. Imogene making port with a load. She stopped just north of the Narrows off Cuckold's Cove. put her crew on ice and soon had two hundred seals which she brought into St. John's "round" not sculped. It was quite a sight to watch the men taking those seals off Port. Two years ago an American ship left St. John's for the ice; she had twin screws or propellors and also a helicopter to spot the seals. She limped into St. John's about a week or so after with both propellors chewed up by ice, making about four knots. She had about two hundred seals and the local crew made nothing. The helicopter was a success as she had a "Walkie Talkie" telephone which notified the ships in which direction the seals were and saved the crew needless walking. If she had a single screw well down in the water the ice would not have damaged it as it did the twin screws which were not deep in the water.

Religion played a large part in the sealers' lives. Generally the Sunday before the ships left for the ice the different churches would hold what was called a "Sealers Service". The clergy would preach appropriate sermons asking God's blessing and protection on the men going out into the deep and doing their business in great waters. It was an inspiration to attend one of these services, hundreds of roughly dressed burly men listening very earnestly and joining heartily in the special hymns such as "Rock of Ages," "Throw out the Lifeline". "Will your Anchor hold in the Storm of Life", etc. At the ice fields as the ships lay rocking on the bosom of the deep, services were generally held between decks on Sunday nights led by a master-watch.

These men were sincere and knew what dangers faced them daily.

The risks were great. I remember as a lad in 1898 watching the landing of bodies from the S. S. Greenland disaster. And I helped to remove the bodies from S. S. Bonaventure which brought to port the remains of the S. S. Newfoundland disaster. Our old friend, Captain George Whiteley, who is still hale and hearty, told me recently the most impressive service he ever witnessed was held one spring when he was out with Captain Sam Blandford in the S. S. Neptune as master-watch. It was a beautiful Sunday morning, blue sky, bright sunshine and a bit warm. ship lay log-loaded ready to "bear up" for home. The crew of 250

men were on deck facing the quarter deck. The lesson for the day was read by a young English doctor who afterwards became the famous Dr. Grenfell of Labrador. The hearty singing of the men who were conscious of the risks and dangers of the voyage about completed made a scene of thankfulness which Captain Whiteley says he will never forget.





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Letters to The Editor

Editor. Atlantic Guardian:

On January 14th. The Newfoundlanders Association of Montreal. Inc., installed the following officers for the year 1954: Frank Doherty, founder of the association, was elected President: Mr. Daniel Farrell-1st Vice President, Mrs. Marcel Roy-2nd Vice President, Mr. Martin Crawford-Recording Secretary, Mrs. Patrick Austin-Corresponding Secretary, Miss Mary Hall-Treasurer. Additional members appointed to the Executive Council were: Edward C. Matthews and Miss Emily H. Miess. Auditors are J. Lewis Taylor and Frank Doherty.

A new Entertainment Committee was appointed under the convenorship of Mr. Harry Brownrigg. Mrs. Roy was appointed Convenor of the Bazaar Committee, Sergeant at Arms—Mr. George Boutcher. Tyler—Mr. Vince O'Quinn.

—MARY AUSTIN. Corresponding Secretary.

P.O. Box 81, Station "B," Montreal, Que.,

Editor, Atlantic Guardian:

I hope you won't mind making a little correction in the December issue of your wonderful little magazine.

It is about your pictorial "North With the Christmas Seal", picture number five. Instead of "Docking at Twillingate' I think you'll find the Christmas Seal is nearing the wharf at Barr'd Islands in this picture.

We were very pleased to note that "Another Port of Call" was the Southside of Joe Batt's Arm (picture number two).

We all regard A. G. as Newfoundland's most delightful publication.

—CHARLES A. BRETT.
Joe Batt's Arm.

Editor, Atlantic Guardian:

I would like very much to say how much I do appreciate reading the letters to the Editor in the A.G. To me it is like getting a personal letter from friends, from countrymen in so many places, many whom we have never seen, or perhaps will never see. The letter from Gordon Bowring (December) is very much in accordance with my feelings about tourist trade in Newfoundland. It is very nice for our own people to be able to go back for a trip to the old home but for any groups of people who are not natives of the country to go as Tourists it would not be practical. They would not find things as satisfactory, regarding travel or accommodation, as they are used to on the mainland. So with Gordon Bowring I would say, "don't attempt any large Tourist trade until Newfoundland is entirely ready fir it, not only by rail, but by a fairly good highway linking up those many beautiful spots of which we are so proud." Last summer my wife and I motored from St. John's around Conception Bay and we were certainly delighted with the fine road. If roads like that crossed the Province and connected the outports, it would be a great asset to Newfoundland.

In looking up some of my records I find that on July 28th, 1904, Newfoundlanders living in the United States visited the homeland by rail. They were given a public reception in Bannerman Park, St. John's, on August 1st, 1904. Could that 50-year old "Visit Home" be celebrated again in 1954? Perhaps there is someone in authority who would give it some consideration. Perhaps Uncle

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—RICHARD BUGDEN

Toronto, Ont.

P. S. I would like to thank those who have expressed appreciation through the A. G. for my poems.

Editor, Atlantic Guardian:

You have achieved a successful publication in the idiom of the Is land, and one which seems to grow and improve with each issue. The GUARDIAN'S pictorial coverage strikes me as of outstanding interest. A defect of some of the earlier Newfoundland publications was to use the old photographic cuts over and over again, so that not only the pictures but the interest became blurred. GUARDIAN gives its readers fresh pictures and clear reproduction.

My good wishes for 1954.

—F. FRASER BOND New York, N. Y.

Editor. Atlantic Guardian:

I saw your Atlantic Guardian in a friend's house and being a Newfoundlander I would like to be a subscriber, to keep in contact with the interesting facts and progress of Newfoundland. I visited St. John's in 1949 to do some caribou and moose hunting, with Wm. Tiller, owner of a plumbing contracting firm. Our trip was very successful and I have suggested to Yankee hunters that they try it. We got quite a write up in a very popular sports magazine. Hoping to receive your next edition.

—C. GIBBONS

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IN

ATLANTIC GUARDIAN

Vols. I to X

Listed alphabetically below are all the firms in Newfoundland and elsewhere who have advertised in Atlantic Guardian at one time or another since the magazine was started. The impressive list was prepared for publication in last month's issue along with the ten-year Table of Contents, but was ommitted for lack of "pace.

Ayre & Sons, Ltd., St. John's. Asbestos Limited, Montreal, P. O. American Aerated Water Co. Ltd. St. John's.

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If A. G. subscribers are as loyal to A. G. advertisers as they are to their "Magazine of Newfoundland", it certainly must pay to advertise in Atlantic Guardian! Bay of Islands Business Men's Association, Corner Brook.

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